

HOUGH FAMILY LETTERS---1879

In Lafayette Orlando Hough's wife, Emiline,¹⁸⁷⁹ writes that "Mr. Bickerstaff has bought two acres(or a little less) of land, a little beyond Wilson's, of Mr. Brown. He has built his house on it and they are living in it."

Warren Brown sold the flour mill to Mr. Leavenworth who "makes very good flour."

From a Hough letter written in Lafayette on Oct. 12, 1879 there has been " a great deal of trouble on the ranche. On the first of Oct. Watson took possession of the ranche with an arm force of 8 men and mooved all our things cattle and all out into the road. Last Tuesday we got an arm furse of about 30 men and retook the place again." On Oct. 22, Hough was still holding the ranch by force. He had offerred the ranch for sale for \$2,500. including "cows and all." Nothing was resolved as of Dec. 21, 1879.

Hough Family letters have been typed from the original letters by Mrs. Helen Shank, member of the Lafayette Historical Society.

Oringinal letters are owned in 1971 by Robert Hough of Orinda, great grandson of Orlando. Microfilm of the letters in the historical files at St. Mary's College library.

(1879)

Hough Springs June 22

Dear Mother.

I recieved your letter Day before yesterday and was very glad to hear from you. we are well as usual and hope these few lines will find you the same. we have got all the hay hauled and in the barn, Oscar Green helped us haul it for the use of the wagon to haul Stantons hay. It took us a-day and a half to haul it.

Allen Jones come up here day before yesterday on the cars and stage, him and peter has gone down to Kings today, Jones and I hauled 3 or 4 sled loads of wood yesterday from the creek, it was willow wood and does not last long. Him and I went a fishing yesterday but did not catch but one fish. they do not bite good. we have killed 1 calf and have got two left. we are milking three cows now. I found when I got here and undone my blankets that the gun barrel was missing. I had it the night before I got to Eppersons and rolled it up tight the same usual. I think some one stole it when I went to Eppersons the next night I did not undo the blankets that night for I slept in the house that night. he had some indians working for him at the time I think some of them stole it for I sent back where I stoped and found I had not left there. we had a man stoping here but he went to the city last wednesday. There is one man stopping here now, or rather camping here he is catching butterflies. Peter wants papa to come up for he wants to go away he says. he is agrowling

half of the time. Bill Miller went up yesterday with a fine coach and four nice horses. He has gone back now. He has got two stages on this road now, he bought the Opposition out and has it himself now. they talk of putting another opposition on soon and reduce the prices, the fare from Bartletts to Colusa is five dollars. Fannies pup is dead, he got sick and could not eat or move so we gave him some poison. he was a nice dog to go after the cows and bring them out of the grain field. Did Shreve's get his water all right. Has my cards come yet. Kings has got 3 or 4 swarms of Bees and two bee tree's. Are your bees making any honey yet. Mr. Kings folks has just been up here today. There is but little travel this season. Direct all the letters to Epperson Colusa Co. as we get them one day sooner than we do the other way. I have not got time to write to Frank tonight as it about milking time and I must go and milk.

write as soon as you can as I am anxious to Hear from you. I wrote this off in a Hurry and have made a good many mistakes.

G.S.H.

I have milked now. A band of sheep went past here today and stopped on the flat below the house, after they had gone past I saw a sheep down by the barn and tried to get Jennie up to it, she was as afraid of it as she was of a panther she never saw many sheep before and did not know what it was. I lassoed the sheep and put it in the barn and gave it some hay. there were 1100 in the band and they would not miss one or two. I must go after the white cow in indian valley tomorrow, and

must go to bed, I could write more if I had time. we have
got 6 or 8 Guenea pigs. we sold some little ones the other
for 75¢ a pair and gave King folks 3.

Allen is building up again I should think he could get sick
of building in that canon and get out of there, he has got
some folks stopping there, two of the men are not expected
to live. we took in \$10 one night not long ago.

Write soon,

Your's Aff.

Lafayette, July 8/ '79

Dear George

We received your letter some time ago, was very glad to hear from you.

We are all very well this summer. The weather is unusually cool now. Your Father has been working for Warren Brown, pulling mustard and hauling hay; they filled our barn full of hay, L. Isaac helped your father.

School closed a week ago last Thursday;--since then Frank and Willie have been killing squirrels for Mr. Brown, he has given the boys \$4.75 for scalps. They found a "bee-tree" yesterday and their father went with them to get it. they got the honey, with out much trouble, it was very white and clean, I never saw nicer honey. Your father sold our calf awhile ago for \$700. The cow gives a large nice mess of milk; it is so good to have all the milk and butter we want.

I have forty little chickens all nearly of a size, they are doing well. I have other hens setting Mrs. J. Taylor brought me (yesterday) some boxes of beautiful plants. Mr Bickerstaff has bought two acres (or a little less) of land, a little beyond Wilsons, of Mr Brown.

He has built him a house on it and they are living in it. Mr Simpson & family left here for Lake Co. a week ago yesterday intending to be gone three weeks. The "Fourth" passed off very quietly in Lafayette; nothing occured worth mentioning except Hastings had some fire works in the evening a few small fire-crackers, two or three bombshells, a double-headed dutchman he

took for a skyrocket--and met with a disagreeable surprise when it went off.

Carrie has printed a little, which she wants I should send to you. Have you got your cards? I sent them to you, soon after I sent the last letter.

The cards were very pretty. I hope you have got them before this.

It is getting late, and I don't think of any thing more to write tonight, so I will close my letter by bidding you good night. Please write as often as you can. I like very much to hear from you.

Yours affectionately Mother

Lafayette, July. 8.

Dear Brother George,

We received your letter some time ago, but mama has not had time to answer it. We are all very well at present and I hope these few lines will find you the same.

The other day when Willie and I went up in the South pasture after the colt we found a bee-tree, and we came home and told papa and we then went up and cut it it had three buckets full of honey and cone together. the honey came out of the tree as if it was in a hive. the honey was very white. A. Allen cut his bee tree up in the pasture he got one bucket of honey out of it. Our bees are working splendid Willie and I have caught 194 squirrels since school was out. we caught 5 rabbits. Mr. Emily is agoing to give Willie and I $2\frac{1}{2}$ cts for catching squirrels on his land. Warren Brown has sold the mill to a man by the name of enworth he is a going to get an other boiler he has taken the old one out and has got it on a wagon and papa and Mr. Boardman are agoing to take the boiler down tomorrow he is agoing to run it here this season but he is agoing to move it down to walnut creek.

Good Knight

Yours Truely

Frank A. Hough

P.S. Mrs Fitzgerrald has not paid the balance of her rent yet I have not called for it if Van Dyke buys he will sue her so as to get possession & rent to someone else

Dear George,

I see by your last letter that you lost the gun barrells if you have not found them yet I want you to take a hors and go back to whare you know you had them last and then enquire at every house and person you see and you may find them yet. I am going to the City tomorrow to find out if Van Dyke will take the rancho he sent up a deed for me to sign last week but it did not suit me & I have not signed it. I cannot tell when I can come up but will know perhaps tomorrow. Mr. Ollive of the fish ranch will come with me to buy the Springs I shal try and get up thare next week if possible. Write soon and let me know how you are all getting along

You Father

Hough Springs Aug 8. 79

Dear Frank.

I recieved two letters from you but have not answered them yet. We are all well as usual.

I went up to Bartlett yesterday, with Peter and Wiley. Wiley took some venison up. He has killed 5 deer since he come here. I went out with him the other day but did not kill any deer I seen 4 fawns and 2 Does I shot at two of them but did not hit them. I am going out again very soon. Fannie has got, seven, little pupies, 4 black and white ones and 3 black ones. We have got two little guinea pig. Aug. 29 I commenced to write to you a good while ago but Did not get much writen. I caught my fiery young American steed today and put the sadle and bridle on her. she bucked and kicked awhile and then went off all right, she kicked two boards off of the barn when I had the sadle on her. She is a powerful colt and is very near as large as a sheep. Mr. King folks cut a Bee tree the other day but did not get much honey, they sent us some, it was not very good.

The Acorn crop is very good this year, there is lots of manzaneta berries this year. I must stop writing and go after the cows. I have got the cows and milked and now I will write a few lines more. There is a man and 8 ladies here tonight with a team, there is some-body here about every night. I will send you down some pine gum when papa comes if you want some I don't know whether you can read this or not, for it

is night scratching. Are your bees making any honey
yet? What do you feed them?

Papa and peter has not got back yet from Mr Eppersons I
guess they will not be Home tonight.

Allen Jones is stopping at Kings yet, he works for his board.
I guess he intends to go back to Oakland pretty soon. Where
does Mary Marsh stop now has she gone back to Clayton.

"Fanies" pupies are great big fellows now, I drownded 3 of
them, Papa and Peter is coming and I must close by bidding
you good night.

Your Brother

Geo. Hough

Hough Springs, Aug. 8. 1879

Dear Papa.

I recieved your letter yesterday and was glad to hear from you. Peter has got all your letter he got one yesterday. He says he will stop Proceedings till you come if you come pretty quick. He is better satisfied since He got your last letter. The Sheriff says you can not sell this place till you prove up on it. Did you get the summons that was sent to you. Allen is in a fix too. The Sheriff attached his Property yesterday for some of his Creditors. I cannot write much now but will some otther time. Yours Aff.

Geo. S Hough.

Direct your letter to Epperson as they are sent right here, Colusa Co.

Lafayette, Aug. 24, '79

Dear George

Some time has passed since I received your letter; but have not until today, had time to answer it. The children have gone to Sunday school, so I am alone, there is no preaching at the church today.

School commenced about three weeks ago. Lafayette is getting to be quite a lively place. Emma and Jo Simpson are stopping to Mr. Simpsons. Mr. Leavenworth has bought the Flour Mill here, and has got a new boiler, and made other repairs in it, and are now running it. They make very good flour. Mr. L. sent us a pail of flour to try it, Mr. & Mrs. Rutherford are here on a visit, or rather here looking for work. B.A. Stephens has been here of late, and delivered six lectures, there was quite a "turn out" to hear him. I went three times to hear him.

The Bartlett pears are getting ripe, we have gathered the most of them, they are not so large as they were last year, but we have more of them.

The grapes are very slow in ripening they will not be ripe in some time yet

My chickens are doing well except a few small ones got caught the other night, some of them their heads were eaten off others were badly bitten but none were entirely eat up, we thought it might be a weasel. Willie saw a rat with one in the drain and set a steel trap there, and has caught three rats, one of them was the largest I ever saw.

The children have come home from sunday school, Carrie said Mr & Mrs. Rutherford were coming here today so I will not write much more today. Do you know when you are coming down here? Your Father, I suppose got up there all right. Please write as soon and often as you can. We all send our love to you.

Yours affectionately

From your Mother

next week) monday or tuesday (

Every thing seems quiet at the Ranch. Mrs. Fitzgerald has rented it to any one yet that I know of:--she has not paid the rent. Frank is getting up a club for the Home Companion today, he has got several subscribers. Andrew Hastings cut an artery in his foot, they had two doctors come "to take it up", he is getting along very well now. Carrie goes to school but the boys are staying out now. Frank bought Andy Allens ax)the one you borrowed of him(for fifty cents. The boys are very industrious, they earn a good deal of money, and other things they get.

I did not think of writing but a few lines when I commenced--but I guess I have written more than you can read. Persons here often inquire about you and say they miss you. George take care of your money. Write as often & soon as you can. With much love from home,

Mother

Hough Springs Aug 28 .

Dear Mother.

I recieved your letter today and was very glad to hear from you, we are all as well as usual. papa got up here all right, he has been out hunting and has killed one deer and a fawn. He went out this morning but has not got back yet. deer are in pretty good order now. I have not killed any yet. I went up to the Spanish Ranch The other day with the Rifle and a little net made out of musketo bars I caught 35 mountain trout in the net in about an hour I caught 18 in one hole. I killed a rattle stopping here. papa has got back from hunting but did not kill any deer. You wanted to know when I was coming home. I can not tell when I will be down. I may be here all winter for all I know. papa will be down, in a day or two. They are trying to start a school. there is schollars enough to keep a pretty good school. Does the cow give much milk? Ours are drying up very fast, as the feed is not very good. The people are leaving Barletts very fast for a week or two, as Election will be very soon now, and it will be ploughing time pretty soon, There is not news Enough in Lake County to fill two pages full. I guess we have made more here in 1 month than they have at the Lafayette House summer, but he can not very we as he can not get rid of the p I heard that Elexander (of Bartl has not made expences this Summer, He has to pay about \$11.00 as rent for

the place, There was not much of a crowd there this summer. ~

Aug. 29th Papa and peter went over to Epperson's today. There is lots of quail here but I can not kill any. I have not set the trap to catch foxes since I have not seen any yet. I saw one wildcat the other day. I think Mr. Rothey's folk would have done better to have stayed at Mr. Browns. Who works there now? I must close and write a little to Frank. I have not writen to him since I Have been up Here. He has writen me two letters. Good night.

Yours Aff.

George S. Hough.

Hough Springs Sept 26, 79

Dear Mother,

I recieved your letter yesterday and was very glad to hear from you. I sent a letter to papa yesterday. Peter got a letter from him also.

There is but little to write as I can think of at present. I went out tonight and killed a deer, (or rather Jack and I) it was not a very large one, but it will make good meat. I killed one a day or two ago that was a good sized one. I caught a "Coon" a week or two ago and Jack caught a skunk. There was one under the house the other day. my shirts are getting pretty well worn out. Grandma keep them mended up. I gathered two pails of wild grapes today they are very good now. There is lots of them this fall. I caught 56 trout the two last times I went afishing up to the "Spanish Ranch". Oct. 2nd: I commenced to write a few days ago but did not finish my let Since then I been chopping wood and hunting some, I killed two wild ducks but have not killed or seen any more deer. Mr. Kings folks have gone down to thier place in the valley. Tell papa that Johnnie King is married again The last deer I killed was bit so it did not keep so we did not get any benefit of it. There is not more that I can think of to write. Tell Frank to write I have not got time to write to him tonight. The mail only goes once a week now. I will send you a couple of my cards I have given away the pretiest ones. write as soon as possible for I am glad to hear from home. excuse mistakes, good night.

George S. Hough

La Fayette Oct..12 1879

Dear Geo

Sinse I last wrote to you I have had a great deal of trouble on the ranche. On the first of Oct Watson took posession of the ranshe with an arm force of 8 men and mooved all our things cattle & all out into the road, last tuesday we got an arm furse of about 30 men & retook the plase again I am now stopping on the ranche with about 17 men with guns no one has been hurt except 2 of our men wer accidentally shot one this morning and one day before yesterday neither of them seriously

I have no time to write more at present as I must hurry back to the ranch

Lafayette, Oct. 12/79 .

Dear George

We received your letter last week. Carrie was perfectly delighted with the letter you sent to her:-she read it over and over several times.

It rained quite hard last night but the weather is very warm and pleasant today.

Your father was home today, and has written some in this letter, so I will not write any thing more about the trouble they have had on the ranch.

We are all well. The children go to school, I wish you was here to go too. Carrie learns very fast. The cards have come that I sent for, I'll send you one of Carrie's. A few weeks ago Brin)your dog(disappeared, and we have not seen or heard any thing about him since.

Carrie will write some to you, but not this time.

Your Father had very bad luck awhile ago:--he went down to Oakland to Grant's reception, and some one picked his pockets and took all of his money, or all except a few ten cent peices he had loose in his pocket. It was a great loss to us, he had all of his money with him; he felt badly about it) or seemed to(and wished he had spent it for his family.

Your father told some funny things that Mockler's said over to the ranch, he is going to Oakland tomorrow and will be home tomorrow night.

There is but little news in Lafayette to write about. Frank is writing some to send to you. I wish you would write as

often as you can. I am always so glad to hear from you.
Carrie says she will send you a card instead of a letter
this time. We all send our love to you.

Yours affectionately

Mother.

Hough Springs Oct 18, 1879 .

Dear Mother

I recieved your letter yesterday, and was very glad to hear from you. I see by papa letter that you are having some trouble with the ranch I hope it will be all right soon. We have had considerble rain for a few weeks past. I was out all day in the biggest storm I went to help some folks over Denison mountain and went off without any coat & I got wet through, but I got \$5. for it so I did not care any thing about it. there is so little to write that I don't know hardly what to write. "Pap" Stone was down this way hunting yesterday, he is stopping at Bartletts his folks are well. Did this last rain start the grass much. it has started it a good deal up here. Has the Literary Sosiety commenced yet? I have not been out hunting for a good while, and have not saw any deer, since I killed the last one. I kill a few quail & ducks once and a while. I sold two deer skins yesterday. Allens things have all been sold out at his springs by the sheriff. I must bring my letter to a close for it late and I must write to papa.

Your Affectionately.

Geo. Hough.

P.S. I think Carrie's cards are very pretty I am very much obliged to her for them.

G.S.H

I will write to Frank some other time.

Hough Springs Oct 18.

Dear papa

I recieved you letter yesterday and was glad to hear from you. Peter has been stopping to Rings for about a week with A. Jones but has come up here tonight. He says he wants you to send up that Notice or Advertisement. He says that I had better commence plowing. He is getting uneasy again. Grandma wants you to write to her, as she feeling pretty bad. Peter says if you come up soon it will be all right. I see an advertisement in the Call, the ranch for sale or Rent, to inquire of Robt. Fitzgerald. I must close for tonight. Write very soon and let us know

Frank got badly hurt yesterday and came near getting killed by havin a pair of horses run away with him that he and Will Tomson and our Will wer hauling walnuts with they started to run down the hill back of the hotell barn and jumped the flume between the bridge and fence and Frank fell under the wagon one wheel of which passed over his right leg he hung to the lines for some time after he struck the ground they broke down all the hitching posts in front of ur lot but two and ran up to John Taylors all who saw the acident thought Frank was surly killed, the wagon was very heavy and not get broke much and Frank is getting along very well.

This letter will have to do for you and your Grand Mother to at present I could not write anything more if I should write tow letters and it is getting late

Your affectionate

Father

Lafayette Oct .22" 1879

Dear George

I received your letter in your mothers today.

I am still in trouble in regard to the ranch I am still holding the place by armed men whether Watson will make any further demonstration or not is hard to tell. I had my cloths off but once in two weeks. Mrs Fitzgerrald has not paid her rent yet and says she wont I am going to Martinez tomorrow to get out Administration papers so as to commence suit against her

I am trying to sell the cows leases ranch and all but it seems all most impossible to give the property away at present I have offerd the whole thing for twenty five hundred dollars cows and all I wrote to Pete some time ago and told him the reason I could not send that advertismet up, for fear he did not get my letter I will repeat what I wrote to him.

the land Commishener in the U.S. land office designates the paper that shall do the advertising and also collects the printing bill which is eight dollars, again I cannot rais the two hundred dollars to pay up on the claim, this land trouble will cost me all I can rais before it is ended. As for my coming up thare it is an utter impossibility untill this matter is settled. I will enclose some of the comments of the papers in regard to the ranch trouble and I think if you show them to Pete he will wait a little longer and give me a show to do what I can the "Cronicle" comes out wors than these that I send which are from the "Oakland times".

Lafayette, Oct. 30, 1879

Dear Brother George

I thought I would try and write a few lines to you. We are all very well at the present and I hope these few lines will find you the same. My leg is about well. The reason why the horses ran away is because there was no brake on the wagon and only loose boards, the boards slid up on the horses and they started to run they turned by the shop toward the floom but they could not get across the floom because Mr Grays team was on there so they ran and jumped across where the boards were off. they knocked down all the poasts but three. Willie and I have been cleaning walnut to sell We have sold \$4.75 worth we sold \$4.25 worth to Mr Davenport \$.25 to Mr Leavenworth \$.25 to Mrs Allen. Andrew Hastings cut his foot very bad with an ax they thought he would bleed to deth. November 5, 1879 I commenced to write to you the other but I did not finish it. Mr Stanley has moved away and Warren Bradley has moved there. Mr Thorn who lives near Walnut Creek has moved in Warren Bradlies place. Willie and I have picked up our walnuts We had seven sacks full Willie and I have husked corn for Mr Brown a day and a half. Papa worked in the mill one half of a day. Good By

Yours Truely

Frank A. Hough

Lafayette, Nov. 16, 1879

Dear Brother George

I received your letter yesterday and was very glad to hear from you. Willie and I have been catching rabbits we have caught 4 rabbits, there is not very many rabbits this year. Warren Brown Hunter Brown Ton Lewis and Albert Allen have gone a hunting to be gone 2 or 3 months. Tom Sewis paid Willie and I that 50 cents that he owed us. I have got 4 subscribers for the home. I bought that light ax of Andrew Allen for \$.50 I have taken a little paper called the Star Spangled Banner it is \$.50 a year. There is a good many walnuts this year. We have got a stray dog here but he is no-account. Jip has got 4 puppies.

November, 20th, 1879

I commenced writing to you the other day but did not finish it. School will be out tomorrow. There is not very many scholars that go to school. Willie and I caught a rabbit today we have caught 4 rabbits.

Yours Truly,

Frank A. Hough

Dear George

Frank and Carrie have written, and are waiting for me to write some, and send off the letter. Carrie wants me to tell you she has got one more head mark since she wrote to you--and is quite sure of the prize. Shreve is working the land formerly occupied by Taylor & C. He has seven men up there. Andy Allen does the cooking for them.

It is very cold here now. It has frozen quite thick ice for a few nights past. The "little paper" you sent to Frank, we had one just like it I thought of sending to you. The boys are saving their money until we go to Oakland, and then they intend to buy them some boots and clothes.

They have finished grinding in the mill, for the present.

George, the shirt stud that I let you take is one I suppose Henry Allen left here, when he staid overnight. If it is his, please give it to him. Be a good boy and take good care of yourself. I would like to see you--and hope things will be so arranged that you will come home soon. Our cow is doing very well I make plenty of butter for our use. Your father and the children have all gone to bed, it is quite late and my sheet is about full and news exhausted, so I'll close by bidding you, Good night

Mother

Frank Hough: 12, 1879

Lafayette Oct.

Dear Brother George.

We received your letter other day and was very glad to hear from you. We are all very well. Papa is having a great deal of trouble with the ranch. They told Mrs Mockler that he things would be all safe if they would put them in the front room. she did so and when Mr Moroga came he thought he would sleep in there when Mrs Mokler found that Moroga had slept there she said that they said her things would be safe in there and that dirty spall poon had slept there himself.

John Malony was one who started over there to the ranch but he got scart out and went and hid behind the school house till they went and drove the men off. Willie and I caught 3 rabbits the other day. We have been setting quail traps we have caught one quail and we put it in a cage and jip and izer broke the cage and let it out. FH.

Dec. 21. 1879

Dear George

I did not think it would be so long before I wrote in answer to your letter, when I received it. It is raining very hard tonight and has rained for several days past.

Henry Brown had a very rainy windy time to get married in. He invited all of the S. Advents here, some went but had a very stormy time to come home (Friday) They had a reception to Warren Browns today.

W. Brown is not here, before he went away, he built Isaac's folks a new house, and Henry is going to live where they use to live

I have sent for six packs of card, like the others I sent for I the extra pack, or premium will come in my name.

Your Father & Boardman have been getting wood down on W.B. place, Lucy Hastings is to be married soon to a man in San Francisco. Mr Simpson & family have gone to Kelseyville Lake Co. to spend the winter It must be very unpleasant for you, up there, when the weather is bad.

Take good care of yourself, and do nothing wrong, and you will come out all right. I wish you was here Christmas, I don't expect to have any thing extra, but it is nice for the children to be at home. Your Father has not got any rent from the ranch that I know of. Please write as often as you can.

I am so glad to hear from you

Mother

Mrs. Wilson has been making lots of trouble in A. Jones'

family.

Apples are very plenty this year, any one can get them by going after them in many places.

We have got a good many down to S. Hodges Do you get lone-
some any this winter?

Good night,

Mother

Lafayette Dec. 21. 1879

Dear Brother George

I received your letter the other day and was very glad to hear from you. We are all very well at present and I hope these few lines will find you the same. Henry Brown is married he was married at Oakland last Thursday. George Winslows father is dead he died at the fish ranch he was 77 years old. Jip caught a rabbit today, she caught it under the old house. It is raining now. it rained the other day and the creeks were very high. Willie and I got some boards that had drifted down. I have got a fence around my garden. A man by the name of Gerow has caught 25 coyotes he catches them in steel traps I do not know if there is any succors in the creek or not Charley Sherman said he saw one. Lottie Thomson has a boy baby. My paper has come and I will send you a copy of it. There is agoing to be a Christmas tree at Walnut Creek. Have you found your gun barrels yet. I must close bidding you good night

Yours Truly

Frank A. Hough

Hough Springs Dec. 29. 79.

Dear Mother.

On my way from Williams the other day I recieved your letter but could not answer it then. Grandma Peter & Jones started for the city last Thursday morning they will be there before you get this letter. Papa's letter was recieved today. The weather is very cold up here the hills are covered with snow and the valley with Ice. It is to cold to rain. Christmas past off very quietly in this part of the country. I was in Willaims Christmas Eve, and Christmas day I was on the road between here & there and stopped to Eppersons that night but being up the most of the night before I was very tired & went to bed about 7 Oclock; we get along very well a-batching it.

There is not any news but what you will here before this letter reaches you. Tell Frank I have not found the gun barrels yet; I have not got time to write to him tonight, in fact I can not find any thing to write. It freezes the pipe in the day time if I do not let it run some. I can not think off any thing more to write to night. I must close by bidding you good night.

Yours Affectionately.

George Sylvanus Hough

P.S. write soon often and much & I will try and do the same.

G. S. H.